

People Impact Assessment (PIA)

Policy/activity or service area to be assessed:	Physical Fitness Policy	Person completing assessment:	
Reason for this assessment: (new policy / review etc.)	Updated Policy	Date of assessment:	22/03/2023

A PIA involves analysing the effect, or potential effect, of the way we do our business upon groups that share protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010. This requires us to look at the equality data which we capture or have access to and to consider the outcome of our community engagement. We need to assess whether our policies and practices show 'due regard' for the three aims (see below) of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The analysis should highlight effects that *increase* equality, *decrease* equality or have *no impact* upon equality across the protected characteristics. Its purpose is not just to paint a picture, but to *identify practical steps* to improve our performance by:

- (a) Eliminating any unlawful discrimination,**
- (b) Advancing equality of opportunity and**
- (c) Fostering good relations between different groups.**

1. Briefly describe the purpose, aims and objectives of the policy/activity: ¹	<u>All</u> operational personnel must ensure that they achieve and maintain the required standard of physical fitness (42.3 ml.kg ⁻¹ .min ⁻¹ VO ₂ max). In so doing it can be assumed that they are highly likely to have the necessary level of physical fitness to perform operational duties safely and effectively, without undue physical strain.
2. Who is the policy/activity aimed at: (communities, staff, partners etc?)	All staff undertaking operational duties specifically. All staff with potential to undertake an operational role by contract type being measured fit for work
3. Who is responsible for the policy/activity: (Directorate/Department/individual)	Director Response Health and Fitness Advisor HR

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Equality Statement

Clearly explain and provide supporting evidence to show how the policy/activity satisfies the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and **DOES NOT** cause or have the potential to cause a **NEGATIVE** (detrimental) effect:

Eliminating any unlawful discrimination:

The policy is based on, and adopts, the NFCC guidance on Managing Physical Fitness supported by National research from the FireFit steering Group and endorsed by the Fire Brigade Union. The methods of testing are deemed to be valid and reliable measuring tools for assessing fitness for duty. The inclusion of the Drill Ground Assessment (DGA) as both a standalone fitness test option and as a validation of role related fitness in the event of the safe standard of $42.3 \text{ ml.kg}^{-1}.\text{min}^{-1}\text{VO}_2$ max not being met, offer a comprehensive assessment of the physical competencies required within the current firefighting role. Ensuring the completion of the PARQ+ before any testing takes place will emphasise mean any issues declared by the individual can be discussed and catered for accordingly.

Advancing equality of opportunity:

Physical fitness is a broad term often used to describe general whole-body fitness. The Service is mindful that there is a need to take into account the type of fitness required to be fit for operational duty. Many operational roles require not only cardiorespiratory fitness but muscular strength, endurance, core strength, flexibility and stability. Through pre-test screening, a choice of test, appropriate support and assistance from the Health & Fitness Advisor and Occupational Health individuals are afforded the best chance to demonstrate fitness for duty. Annual tests are supported by more frequent testing for those who do not meet the standard, to ensure that fitness is being suitably maintained. Individuals are encouraged to test themselves and seek advice and support at the earliest opportunity if they are unable to maintain appropriate fitness. Ensuring the completion of the PARQ+ before any testing takes place will emphasise mean any issues declared by the individual can be discussed and catered for accordingly.

Fostering good relations between different groups:

The Service recognises that fitness levels are determined by physiological variances (including age, gender, ethnicity and training effect) therefore a suite of physical fitness tests is available to choose from, enabling individual preferences and any previous or current medical history to be taken into account. An integral part of safe firefighting is the effective maintenance of physical health and fitness (Siddall et al., 2014). By offering an element of choice it is anticipated that the individual requirement to both take responsibility for and monitor personal fitness and performance levels will be increased.

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Ultimately it is hoped this will reflect a more positive and ongoing approach to physical fitness and thus better fitness for operational duty and an improved fitness culture across all staff roles. All employees are actively encouraged to share and champion the benefits of good physical fitness with peers and colleagues. Operational staff, by the nature of their role, often offer support and positive experience and role modelling across the workforce. This is particularly advantageous where the % of workforce women staff are dominant in green book roles

Where the policy/activity **DOES** or has the **POTENTIAL TO** have a **NEGATIVE** (detrimental) effect indicate which of the Protected Characteristics **MUST** be considered:

Describe the NEGATIVE (detrimental) effect and provide supporting evidence for your rationale *	
Age	There is a natural decline in aerobic capacity (VO ₂) with age in a healthy, active adult (McArdle et al., 2000; Sykes, 2007), however it is not certain that an individual's cardiovascular fitness will change. There are other factors that influence changes in VO ₂ (Jackson et al., 1995; Jackson et al., 1996). Factors such as a decrease in HRmax, decrease in maximum cardiac output and an increase in body weight could affect VO ₂ over a period of five to ten years even if the individual remains active (McArdle et al., 2000).
Disability	Where individuals suffer from a disability that may impact upon their fitness ability, reasonable adjustment may be required. This might be by way of adjusting a fitness test to accommodate this or by providing additional time in order to improve upon one or more aspects of fitness.
Gender reassignment	It is important to acknowledge that an individual in the process of gender re-assignment may experience some adverse effects to their health. Appropriate individual support would be offered.
Marriage or civil partnership	NA
Pregnancy or maternity	Individuals that have notified SFRS that they are pregnant in accordance with the maternity policy are placed on modified duties and will not be required to carry out a Fitness Assessment. The test must be completed before returning to full operational duties after maternity leave, however tailored support to improve fitness is available if required.
Religion or belief	NA

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<p>Race</p>	<p>Physical characteristics of Caucasians such as larger lung volumes due to increased numbers of alveoli and physically larger (wider) chest cavities can mean total lung capacity and vital capacity are between 5 – 20% higher than other groups (Asian, Chinese and Indians). Caucasians also have higher fat free masses as well as higher inspiratory and expiratory muscle pressures. Chest dimensions, together with height and race can explain 90% of the variation in forced vital capacity and 86% of the variation in total lung capacity seen between these groups (Donnelly, 1991).</p>
<p>Sex</p>	<p>Cardiorespiratory fitness is recognised to be generally lower in females when compared to males, McArdle et al., (2001) suggest that this is between 15 – 30%. Men generally have a larger body size, which in turn results in a larger cardiac muscle and therefore a greater blood volume. This is also advantageous to males as they produce greater maximal stroke volume and cardiac output values than females. There is also an average difference in body composition of approximately 10% between males and females (females having a higher body fat %). A higher percentage of body fat equates to less lean tissue and therefore a lower muscle mass (McArdle et al., 2001). This could also account for the difference seen in VO₂Max.</p> <p>Therefore female FF may require additional tailored support in order to maintain minimum levels of physical fitness for safe and effective firefighting. However, as with age, this is by no means inevitable and continued maintenance of physical training and leading a healthy, active lifestyle can substantially mitigate this disparity. Any advice provided as part of a fitness appointment is always give in relation to person specific requirements and the individual needs at the time, taking into account appropriate clinical, family and exercise history as well as current lifestyle habits.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p>NA</p>
<p>Socio-economic disadvantage ²</p>	<p>Reviews of over 300 studies indicate that income, education, and socioeconomic status are generally positively associated with Physical activity (PA) (Bauman et al., 2002). Similarly Gordon-Larsen et al., (2006) suggest that lower-SES and high-minority areas had reduced access to facilities, which in turn was associated with decreased PA. A limitation in this area of work is what defines PA and the self-report nature of the data relying on accurate recall.</p>

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	Support is provided based on individual requirements, this includes advice, support and guidance around affordable sustainable lifestyle habits. Examples include healthy eating on a budget and bodyweight PA sessions (requiring no equipment).
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* **NOTE:** Where any **NEGATIVE** (detrimental) effects are likely to occur:

- (a) For the policy/activity to continue corrective actions/amendments **MUST** be taken to prevent/minimise unlawful discrimination
- (b) An action plan **MUST** be completed (next section)
- (c) Where a negative (detrimental) effect cannot be avoided, continuation of the policy/activity (with or without amendment) **MUST** be justified

Action plan

This action plan **MUST** accompany the policy/activity and be used continually to assess any negative (detrimental) effects resulting from the delivery of or amendments to the policy/activity based on customer feedback and evaluation.

Negative/detrimental effect	Action needed to prevent/minimise it	By who	By when	Complete (tick)
Variations by age and sex	Early intervention for those who are struggling to maintain their fitness at the required standard. The option of a choice of fitness test to maximise individual strengths. Reporting and monitoring of results by age and sex, both at the initial recruitment stage and for annual fitness testing.	Health & Fitness Advisor Managers Policy HR	Recurring	
Disability	There is flexibility around booking appointments and the time of day selected, for example this helps to accommodate a time-gap between medication and a physical fitness test – putting someone in a ‘test’ scenario is different from ‘normal’ occupational exposure. Ensuring the completion of the PARQ+ before any	OH	As necessary	

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Race	Monitor results from non-Caucasian groups	Health & Fitness Advisor	Recurring	

All Completed PIA's should be submitted to E&D team for approval.

Signed: _____ **(E&D)**

Name: _____

Date: _____

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